

Then there was the story of a gipsy who came round trying to sell eggs, but finding no market, she "overlooked" the pig, and the pig became ill; so someone cut off a bit of the pig's tail and burnt it, with the result that the gipsy was brought back stamping and screaming at the door, unable to stop until she had removed the charm from the pig, which recovered. Another instance is given of the same thing happening to a horse, when the same countercharm was successfully tried.

There was a ghost, too, in the village, who used to sit on the wall and spin. On one occasion he helped a man who came in late one night to take off his boots; on another he appeared when a man was beating his wife, and gave him such a fright that the offence was never repeated! A useful ghost, that!

But the most astonishing thing of all was a circumstance belived by all around that a family in a neighbouring village not only had power of witchcraft, but also possessed *imps*. This family had the power of mesmerising animals. They could divert a horse and waggon from the way it should go by mere force of will; and this power was due to the fact that they kept imps in a cupboard near the fire-place; they were small and white, something like toads—and had been handed down from generation to generation, and were bequeathed to neighbours when the family died out.

Of minor superstitions there are many. No one would dream of starting to work in a fresh situation on a Saturday. If the visitor puts back his chair in its place against the wall, it is looked on as a sign he will not come again. If the clock strikes while the hymn is being sung, a death in the parish is sure to follow; also a certain deadness of sound when the bells are rung is another sign: and deaths always come in threes—two in one parish and one in the neighbouring one, or vice versa. "For years," said my informant, a very intelligent woman, "I have never known this to fail." Then if it—

"Rain afore Church,  
Rain all the week,  
Little or much."

These things, and many others like them, are believed in most firmly, often by the educated as well as the uneducated.

## NORMANDY IN SEPTEMBER.

### II.

Lisieux is a charming old town with numbers of interesting houses and a cathedral. In the latter is a Lady Chapel built by a former bishop of Lisieux as a self-imposed penance for having condemned Jeanne D'Arc.

One of the side chapels, dedicated to St. Anne, has a most beautiful beaten metal altar set with coloured stones and a fine painting of S. Anne and the Virgin.

The Church of St. Jacques contains a curious painting showing how the relics of St. Ursin were miraculously brought to the town by Delicieux. In this, as in all the Churches, there is a statue to St. Antony of Padua; round him most of the peasant folk congregate, and there are two little boxes, one for offerings and the other for "demands."

Saturday is big market day, and the square in front of the Cathedral was filled with stalls—drapery, vegetables, household pottery, cutlery, flowers, fruit and poultry and toys all mixed up together. The "con-con" is a great commodity here, being bought whole and in slices. It is like a huge green melon, and inside the colour is deep pink, almost tomato.

One wishes that the S.P.C.A. had agents abroad, for the treatment of hens, rabbits, and ducks is cruel. They are herded together, banged about on stations and market squares; frequently one saw them wriggling and bleeding from the mouth.

Before leaving Lisieux we were present at the Cathedral on the occasion of a priest celebrating his first Mass. The Altar was decked with evergreens, and the whole building decorated with coloured flags.

Pont l'Evêque is distinguished by its Church with a quaint tower, and a house dating from William the Conqueror—which latter we failed to discover except on a picture post card.



Evreux is disappointing, for all the old houses seem to have been painted over, and the Cathedral is spoiled outside by an attempt at Grecian decoration. Inside there is some wonderful carving of oak screens, and the Chancel gates are wrought iron and gilt. Beyond these and the belfry there is nothing to see.

Mantes is another Cathedral town, with an old gateway on the quai. Through this one passes on to the bank of the Seine, which was very placid the day we were there. There is an erection of a kind called a bathing establishment, which looked exceedingly dirty and uninviting. . . . In the Cathedral there are stained glass windows of the Kings and Queens of France; also a series of Saints, including St. Cloud, represented with a pair of scissors and a large bunch of fair curls.

We left for Paris next day, but not to stay there. It is a general starting point, and one has to go there in order to go somewhere else!

Our destination was Louviers, an old manufacturing town with a beautiful church and an old inn—the Grand Cerf. We searched in vain for the old courdes Templiers. After seeing the market we went on to Les Audelys by way of Vauvray. The scenery is very varied. After crossing the Seine we travelled through a cultivated plain as far as Vacherie. From there the land begins to rise suddenly on the left, and by the time La Roque is reached there are tall white cliffs, and in the distance the ruins of Chateau Gaillard commanding the passage of the Seine, and overlooking an enormous track of country—a truly aggressive and impregnable stronghold it must have been for the Lion-heart.

We thought it best to stay first at Grand Audely and then at Petit Audely, as they are not very close together. At the former place we lodged in a lovely old hostel, once the residence of the bishops of Rouen. The butler's sitting-room is beautifully panelled, and was the old chapel; the window has remained, and contains figures of the crucifixion. The staircases and doors are marked with salamanders and fleurs de lys and beautifully-carved heads. The Church of St. Clothilde has a healing spring near by, and the legend is as follows: St. Clothilde was superintending the building of the church, and the workmen having nothing to drink appealed

to her. She led them to this spring and bade them drink, the water miraculously tasting like wine. The anniversary of this is kept every year. With much solemnity there is a procession to the spring, and the pouring into it of a bottle of wine. Then any who are ill, especially children with stomach ache, are cured of their complaint by stepping into the spring.

Petit Audely is beside the river Seine, towered over by the Chateau. After a very stiff climb we got up into the ruins, and realised how well the Lion defied France—for the walls command a complete view of all the roads and the river for miles.

We seemed here to have come suddenly upon the season of autumn—there is such glorious colouring, such as we never see in England—all shades of orange, scarlet, and ruby; yet hardly equal to the beauty of the Gironde Valley in November.

Reluctantly we left for Dieppe, where, after a very peaceful Sunday, closing with the most perfect singing of Ave Maria and O Salutaris at Vespers, we ended our holiday on October 3rd.

## MARIE'S GIANT.

Once upon a time there was a poor giant who was very unhappy, because no one believed in him. He was very strong; but the good folk only said he was brutal. He was very clever; but men complained of his low cunning. He made several great plans, such as turning a neighbouring river down the valley to supply the people with water; but they only said he was scheming to drown them all, and they built a great barrier to render this impossible. At last the giant, who had of course not been brought up to think very highly of such pigmies as human beings, got angry, and began to think out a terrible revenge. "Why should I hold my hand," thought he, "I could crush all their villages with



one stamp of my foot: they think me an evil monster, do they; very well, I will become a devouring dragon."

Just about this time in the village which nestled beneath the rock on which the giant's castle was built, there happened to be a little girl with a small body and a large heart. She loved her father and mother dearly. She was a sort of fairy godmother to her baby sister. She loved the villagers, she loved their cattle, their horses, their poultry, and their pets. She loved the birds on the trees and the very fish in the river, and every blade of grass on the hillside. One afternoon when she came out of school she found all the village people in great distress. An order had come down from their master, the giant, that at dawn on the morrow they should all assemble in the market place, when he from his castle-crag above would amuse himself by throwing stones at them to crush them. They could not fly, for the only pass out of the valley ran through the giant's garden; so despair was written on every face. "Tyrant," "demon," "brute," "remorseless wretch," every evil name was heaped upon their master; though hitherto they had at least received a certain rough justice at his hands. At last the oldest and wisest man in the village advised the people to dig deep pits in which to hide; and every man, woman, and child set to work burrowing for dear life. Did I say every child? Not all; for little Marie was not amongst them. Her loving little heart had overflowed with grief at the sad news; but she had been seized with pity for the poor lonely giant, who was so badly off for something to play at, that he had to throw stones at her dear friends! So she was toiling up the steep path, going to ask the giant whether he would play ball with her instead—think of the courage of her!

Arrived at the castle she rang the bell, and was led into the awful presence by one of the giant's attendant gnomes. Marie shut her eyes and said her prayers hard all the way down the passage, but found strength to open them at last. There sat the giant in the window looking very large and mighty grim. "Fire and fury," he shouted, "what is the midge here for?" "Oh please, sir, I'm so sorry for you," said Marie all in a rush, "I couldn't bear to think of your feeling so dull and sad up here all alone; *please, please* don't throw stones at the people to-morrow. Schoolmaster always

tells our boys that they mustn't, for its mere idle mischief. Look, I've brought my best painted ball to play with you; and oh, please *do* have a game with me instead; I can stay till bedtime, and I'll be very good, and not scream even if I drop it. Oh, please, please do; or have you got a favourite game you'd like better?" And then Marie had to stop to gasp for breath. "You've been sent up here as a spy, you mean," said the giant, "but you'll never go down again to say what you've seen. Do you know what I do with spies? I tie them on the eagle tower for the birds to peck their eyes out. And he closed his mouth with a snap. The tears came into Marie's eyes, and she gulped hard, but it was not with fear. "Please, sir," she said, "you don't understand. Mother doesn't know I've come, and I hope she won't worry for I forgot to tell her. I've come to play with you because you're lonely, you poor thing."

"Do you think I am going to destroy your paltry village because I've nothing better to do, little idiot? I am going to wipe it out because it stands between me and my work. You and your fellow-idiot you don't understand, and you won't help to make Gigantica the greatest land on earth, so you must go. Now go, or——" and the giant pointed with a monstrous finger to the door.

Marie looked pitiful. "Please won't you 'splain to them, sir?" she said, "I'm sure they don't mean to be stupid, and if you'll tell me I'll do my very best to say it all over again without mistakes." "Do you mean to say you aren't frightened of me? Fire and fury, what do you stand there for! you ought to be flying for your life," roared the giant. "Please don't be angry Mr. Giant: good-bye, I'll go home if you don't want me;" and looking very abashed, poor little Marie went up to the awful creature and put her arms round his neck to kiss him good-bye. The giant was flabbergasted. No giant, let alone any miserable human being, had ever dared to touch him in past years; and here was this midge perched on the arm of his chair trying in vain to get its arms round his neck; but as this was as large as an oak trunk Marie found it difficult! Somehow the giant felt he rather liked it; if one is a very terrible person, it is refreshing to meet someone who, without insolence, can treat one like an ordinary creature. He was a little afraid of crushing



Marie, but he gingerly picked her up between his finger and thumb, and perched her on his shoulder; then he got himself out of his chair—which was something like an earthquake for Marie—marched out on to the balcony overlooking the village beneath. Marie was not quite certain whether or no she was going to be thrown down, but peeping round the great headland made by the giant's chin, she looked up into his eyes, and they were full of tears. "Oh, Mr. Giant dear, don't cry! Have I been naughty?" said Marie in great distress. "No, child," said the giant rather gruffly. "What did you say you had brought to play with me—a ball. Throw it down into the village, it wont hurt anybody," for he saw rather a doubtful expression on Marie's little face. Reassured she took the ball from her pocket and threw! And oh, wonderful! All that the giant had planned and the village had resisted instantly came to pass! The old huts disappeared, and beautiful houses took their place. The river flowed tranquilly through the hollow without drowning so much as a lamb. Among the mountains appeared a broad high road leading to the outer world. And strangest of all, in the market place below, all the folk were gathered together cheering their benefactor, "the great and good giant." See what a little love can do, Marie," said the giant, "let us go down into the village together and make everybody happy, and help everybody to understand." And they went. And Marie said it was all the dear giant's doing, and the giant said it was all that dear Marie's doing, and the villagers thought it was both. And the rest of the story belongs to that future in which men live happy ever afterwards.

R. A. P.

## SOMETHING ABOUT HEYSHAM AND FALKLAND.

This quaint little fishing village, at the foot of Morecambe Bay, is steadily rising to fame through the wonderful excavations which have been made at its southern extremity in order to form a harbour, and thus to furnish the Northerners with an easy access to the Isle of Man, Dublin, Londonderry and other Northern Irish ports.

Coming to it as I have done from the grey mountains and white chalk roads of the West Riding of Yorkshire, the red granite roads and cliffs impart a kindly feeling of warmth. This little strip of granite is constantly being put into contrast by other substances, such as the sandstone rocks—the volcanic remains which surround the point at the Near Naze—and the muddy ooze which receives the foot of the unwary.

By the rocks of the Near Naze, up against the cliff, there is one of those openings which have been caused by the falling away of a mass of cliff-rock below the surface, and thus leaving a hole in a projecting piece of turf-covered land resembling the Devil's Dyke and other fragmentary rocks such as abound in Cornwall and Wales. At low water the rocks of Heysham are an endless delight to those who can appreciate them. Covered with wracks of all kinds, they are a happy hunting ground to any who find delight in seaweeds, and particularly to those who enjoy inhaling the health-giving odour of iodine and musk. Many of the rocks, especially those which lie the farthest from the cliff—which, as I have previously stated is hard at this point—are of considerable height and girth, and are covered with hanging weed and clinging barnacles. Beyond them the sea runs in deep channels, and, receding, leaves behind it at their base deep pools such as entrance children; but the sand in these pools is of a peculiarly succulent nature. The sea is drawn out a long way beyond the rocks, leaving stretches of hard